

SEMIOTICS 2002

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0. Nothingness is the Prior of all Priors, but is not (the zero prior). From the Nothingness the potencies unfold via the infinitesimals (the first positive prior). From the potencies nature unfolds (the second positive prior). From nature and its potencies the archetypal pre-formal potencies unfold (the third positive prior). From the archetypal potencies the nascent orders of nature unfold (the fourth positive prior). The nascent orders of nature transform the unfolding of the four positive priors into differentiated enfoldings. The enfoldings coalesce into the innumerable enfolded orders of nature.

1. The fundamental fissure within the now emergent nature, via the four positive priors, is that between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. There is no analogical bridge from the world of creation (*natura naturata*) to the underconscious of nature (*natura naturans*). The dimension of nature known as nature naturing has neither possibilities nor actualities, but is only

constituted by potencies. The dimension of nature known as nature natured is constituted by orders that manifest possibilities and actualities, but is not constituted (per se) by potencies. Potencies are presemiotic, pretemporal, and prespatial. The world of nature natured has neither internal nor external relations with the dimension of nature naturing. The unfolding ground of nature naturing manifests ontologically unique traces within the innumerable enfolding and enfolded orders of the world.

2. Nature is all that there is. There can be no theory of nature. The term "nature" is more generic than any other term as it has no meaningful opposite term. There is no supernatural realm.

2.1. Nature is the availability of orders but is not an order in itself. Any given order is connected to at least one other order in the world. Any given order is disconnected from at least one other order in the world.

3. Nature, as both naturing/unfolding and as natured/enfolding, is not a system of internal or external relations.

3.1. Nature is constituted by innumerable subaltern worlds, each of which has limited scope.

3.2. Systems and non-systems obtain in innumerable ways.

3.3. There are natural continua in the world, but there is no continuum of all continua. Each order in nature has limited scope and efficacy. Field phenomena are also limited in scope and efficacy. Non-relevance is not a relation, either external or internal.

4. Nature itself obtains prior to the distinction between the sacred and the non-sacred. The sacred is an enfolding emergent from the unfolding of nature naturing. Sacred orders are located within the orders of nature natured. Sacred orders contain traces of their origin in nature naturing. None of the traditional divine predicates apply to sacred orders, e.g., those of omniscience, omnipotence, or omnipresence. The sacred is distinct from the more ubiquitous non-sacred. The sacred is encountered by human recollection in and as its numinosity.

5. The sacred is manifest in four primary modalities.

5.1. The four modalities are: the sacred folds, the sacred intervals, providingness, and the unruly ground. Each modality has unique features not shared by the other modalities. No set of internal or external relations links the four modalities. Sacred folds and their intervals manifest archetypal formative powers. No one mode of the sacred is more or less real than another. While there are no degrees of being in the sacred, there are implicit dimensions of increasing or decreasing scope.

6. The first modality of the sacred is that of the sacred fold.

6.1. Sacred folds embody a dramatic increase in semiotic density and scope within their attendant orders.

6.2. Sacred folds function much like an astronomical stellar body, radiating great power into and through non-sacred orders.

6.3. Sacred folds occur in innumerable gestalts in inorganic nature, organic nature, the self, histories, and mythic structures.

6.4. Sacred folds have natural, not supernatural, histories, i.e., they are subject to entropy.

6.5. Sacred folds are entwined with human projections, but also have a quasi-independent status. There is no ultimate sacred fold, although any fold can become translucent to any or all of the four positive priors and to the Prior of all Priors.

7. The second modality of the sacred is that of the sacred interval.

7.1. Sacred intervals always occur in conjunction with specific sacred folds.

7.2. Sacred intervals dramatically dampen semiotic power; a process partially analogous to the way an astronomical black hole pulls in energy from near bodies.

7.3. Sacred intervals occur in innumerable and hard to detect subtle forms within the orders of the world.

7.4. Sacred intervals have natural, not supernatural, histories, tied to the entropy of their respective sacred folds.

7.5. Sacred intervals are entwined with human projections, but also have a quasi-independent status. There is no ultimate sacred interval, although any

interval can become translucent to any or all of the four positive priors and to the Prior of all Priors.

8. The third modality of the sacred is that of providingness.

8.1. Providingness "has" no divine plan, it is the sheer providingness (be-ness) of what does obtain.

8.2. Providingness provides prior to the divide between good and evil.

8.3. There is no location within nature natured where providingness is absent, but this providing is not omnipresent, as providingness "has" no location "from" which to provide.

8.4. Providingness is not a predicate of anything.

8.5. Providingness is not omnipotent, that is, it is not in any kind of power relationship with the orders of the world.

8.6. Providingness is experienced by the human self as natural grace.

9. The fourth modality of the sacred is that of the unruly ground.

9.1. The unruly ground is the non-located unfolding for the sacred orders of the world.

9.2. The unruly ground is without logos or meaning per se.

9.3. The unruly ground is not related to the sacred orders of the world through the principle of sufficient reason.

9.4. The unruly ground leaves presemiotic traces within the sacred orders of the world. The sacred is rooted in the unruly ground of which it is an enfolding/enfolded.

9.5. The unruly ground is most directly encountered through the human unconscious on the edges of its chaotic displacement.

10. The sacred modalities are differently entropic and non-entropic.

10.1. Sacred folds admit entropy into their histories.

10.2. Sacred intervals admit entropy into their histories.

10.3. Providingness is neither entropic per se nor anti-entropic per se.

10.4. The unruly ground is anti-entropic insofar as it is manifest as traces within orders rather than being orders of relevance in themselves within entropic nature natured.

10.5. A sacred interval functions entropically as it entwines with its specific sacred fold.

10.6. A sacred fold functions anti-entropically from the standpoint of an immediate cross-section of the human life-process, but cannot do so in the infinite long run.

11. The human process co-constitutes the first two modalities of the sacred (folds and intervals), but the sacred is not reducible to these forms of co-constitution.

11.1. To be human is to be the locus of internal unconscious complexes.

11.2. All complexes of the unconscious are subject to projection onto sacred folds and intervals.

11.3. A transference field connects projections to their orders of relevance.

11.4. A sacred countertransference exists but it is not located in a conscious divine agent.

11.5. The sacred countertransference is experienced by the self as a form of resistance to the self's projection onto a sacred fold and interval.

11.6. The sacred countertransference is not a human product.

12. There is no sacred history of be-ness or providingness.

12.1. Histories obtain but no History.

12.2. There can be sacred histories.

12.3. Histories are subaltern configurations within nature.

12.4. The "sum" of histories over time is neither cumulative nor unidirectional.

12.5. Each self occupies numerous histories simultaneously.

12.6. Part of the moral life consists in the ongoing adjustment of histories.

13. Spirits exist in a different modality than the four modalities of the sacred.

13.1. Spirits are ontologically unique, that is, they do not belong to nature naturing as potencies or to nature natured as orders.

13.2. Spirits expand and contract as they encounter non-spiritual orders of the world.

13.3. Spirits are not pre-determined bodies of interpretation.

13.4. Spirits are not conscious agents in any sense analogous to human forms of consciousness.

13.5. The dimension of spirits is a "lesser" infinite than that of either the unfolding or the enfolded, but they have no map able contour, either per se, or from the perspective of human selves.

13.6. Spirits interact with sacred folds and intervals while also quickening and augmenting natural grace (providingness/be-ness) so that it becomes the grace of the spirits.

14. Spirit-Interpreters enter into human communities of interpretation.

14.1. Spirit-Interpreters are modalities of the spirits that enter specifically into the semiotic realms between and among human selves.

14.2. Interpretive communities enhance and ramify signs held in common insofar as Spirit-Interpreters facilitate this hermeneutic process.

14.3. Natural communities are human collectives that merely reiterate common signs without ramification; hence they are bereft of Spirit-Interpreters.

14.4. While Spirit-Interpreters are not bodies of attained signs, they open out semiosis for finite sign-users.

14.5. Spirit-Interpreters make translation and augmentation of meaning possible in the time process.

14.6. Each community of interpretation is the locus for different Spirit-Interpreters.

15. Sacred meaning has its originating impulse in melancholy.

15.1. Melancholy is not directed toward any specific order of relevance within nature natured.

15.2. Melancholy has its ultimate roots in the hidden memory of the Prior of all Priors, although it can be awakened by any or all of the four positive priors.

15.3. The primal rootless root gets covered over with finite "lost objects" that intrude themselves onto the religious process.

15.4. Melancholy can come to rest on any of the four positive priors, each differently infinite, but the restlessness of melancholy will remain.

15.5. Melancholy in its mediated form is a hidden unfolding of the grace of the spirits.

15.6. Melancholy is a totalizing opening/closing that initially creates awareness of the fissuring between nature naturing and nature natured.

16. Sacred meaning has its culminating impulse in ecstatic bliss.

16.1. Ecstatic bliss occurs only after melancholy has opened the self to its ultimate lost "whence".

16.2. Ecstatic bliss opens the human process to the originating unfolding that speaks to it from within and against its rigidified enfoldedness.

16.3. The life of the spirit consists of a dialectical engagement of melancholy and ecstatic bliss.

16.4. The unknown root of the Nothingness appears through the ecstasies of nature naturing, and in turn, through opening traces within nature natured.

16.5. The opening traces of the Prior of all Priors are not orders of relevance, nor are they filled with semiotic content.

16.6. Ecstatic bliss has no object, but rests in the eternal stillness within the periodic movement of unfolding/enfolding.